

**TOWN OF ROCKY HILL
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MEETING OF OCTOBER 28, 2014**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Desai called the Tuesday, October 28, 2014, Special Meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. in the Town Council Room, Rocky Hill Town Hall, 761 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

Present: Kevin Clements, Vice Chairman
Victor Zarrilli, Secretary
Giuseppe Aglieco, Commissioner

Alternates: William O'Sullivan
Mike Casasanta

Also: Kimberley A. Ricci, Dir. Planning & Building/Asst. ZEO
Eileen A. Knapp, Recording Secretary

2. MEETING FACILITATOR - Glenn Chalder, Planimetrics

Commissioner's received in their packets booklets, which are available on the Town's website, that are guides for possible strategies for the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). This information includes results of surveys with Department heads and members of Boards and Commissions along with results of the Public Meeting that was held in September. This evening they will be going over these packets and discussing these issues. The goal is that after discussing these topics, a draft plan will start to develop.

a. Planning Issues

Mr. Chalder went through this booklet, which is an overview of some of the information submitted and collected so far and is a summary of the following:

- issues that the public cares about today
- results of questionnaires given to Department Heads and Board Members
- results of the public meeting

b. Conservation Strategies

Mr. Chalder said Conservation Strategies address things Rocky Hill may want to preserve or protect going forward. These are things that would be important to the ambience and character of the community and this section suggests strategies for the Town to consider as we address these issues going forward. The different topics include the strategy itself, policies to guide future activities and specific tasks that can be undertaken to accomplish the strategy.

The following are the Conservation Strategies that were discussed along with the associated policies and tasks:

- Protect Natural Resources
- Create an Open Space System
- Focus on Water-Related Open Space
- Establish a Design Review Process
- Enhance Physical Character – Scenic Resources
- Protect Farms and Farming
- Protect Historic Resources
- Enhance Physical Character-Vegetation
- Enhance Physical Character – Overall Maintenance
- Enhance Community Spirit
- Promote Sustainability and Resiliency

One area that Mr. Chalder suggested the Commission focus on an analysis of the Open Space Subdivision Regulations. There really aren't any open space criteria in the Regulations and he noted that the State Statutes do allow for a fee in lieu of open space provision. There was a discussion about what the term "open space" would mean for the Town. Commissioner Casasanta suggested determining a percentage of open space the Town would like to strive to attain. Mr. Chalder said he would send a letter to the Open Space and Conservation Commission asking for their thoughts on what that percentage should be. He said this is an opportunity to identify areas that can be connected like Town parks, the Meadows, Dividend Pond and other open space areas.

Mr. Chalder pointed out that there are 4 1/2 miles of water-related open space along the riverfront that other Towns don't have. They need to find a way to capitalize on this area to attract people from other Towns.

Through the information gathering process there seems to be a desire for design review procedures. The Town had a Design Review Advisory Board but was disbanded and an Architectural Review Board was created however there have been no appointments to that Board yet. Mr. Chalder felt it would be more encompassing to have a Design Review Board that would address more than just architectural issues.

Mr. Ray Carpentino, Economic Development Director, said the Town already has design guidelines that were developed in 2006. These will continue to be in effect but renamed Architectural Review Advisory Guidelines. These address architecture, open space, landscaping etc.

Mr. Chalder said the although undeveloped land is not really open space because it is privately owned land that isn't protected, it still enhances the character of the community. There are programs in Connecticut that allow the Assessor to grant reduced assessments to properties

provided they fall in to one of three categories, farms, forest and open space. This PA 490 Program may allow the Town to preserve undeveloped land longer.

Mr. Chalder read a letter submitted by the Open Space Acquisition and Farmland Preservation Commission Subcommittee, suggesting additional recommendations in terms of protecting farms and farmland in Rocky Hill. If the Commission is comfortable with these suggestions, they can be incorporated into the POCD.

c. Development Strategies

No discussion.

d. Infrastructure Strategies

No discussion.

e. Implementation Strategies

No discussion.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS on the Plan of Conservation and Development Update

Mr. Ed Chiucarrello of 40 Riverview Road addressed the Commission. He wondered if the picture contest was still taking place. Mrs. Ricci said the picture contest has not begun yet. Mr. Chiucarrello was also concerned about the advertising for the POCD meetings because there hasn't been a lot of public in attendance at the meetings. Meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month. Mr. Chiucarrello said he is happy to see Town signage being addressed. He is in favor of trying to connect the Town's open space. He wants to make sure all the Town's Historic Districts are included on the maps because these areas can be used to help connect the trails throughout the town. It is important to find a way to connect the open space on both sides of I91. As far as the new section addressing low-impact development, Mr. Chiucarrello suggested giving developers incentives for these types of projects.

Ms. Krista Mariner of 58 Farms Village Road said she is in favor of preserving the existing farmland in Rocky Hill.

Mr. Christopher Duff of 61B Brookwood Drive said he was happy to see the issue of sustainability addressed. He suggested making a guide of best practices available to local businesses that could help them make small, sustainable changes in their everyday lives and tie that to a recognition program to acknowledge their efforts. Mr. Duff suggested holding a Town 5k as a way of highlighting the trails in Rocky Hill.

Ms. Marty Stiglich of 214 Woodfield Crossing said she has been working on the Achieve Initiative, which involves the mapping of all the trails and parks in Wethersfield, Rocky Hill, Newington and Berlin. This information may be useful for this POCD update and also for Residents looking for information on trails in Rocky Hill and surrounding Towns.

4. NEXT MEETING DATE - Tuesday, November 25, 2014

Mr. Chalder said his goal is to have a draft plan in January. They will be going through booklets 5, 6 and 7 in the next two months.

The next POCD meeting will be Tuesday, November 25th.

5. ADJOURN

A MOTION was made by Commissioner O'Sullivan to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Casasanta. All were in favor, MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen A. Knapp
Recording Secretary